

Regulations for COOL – Fish and Shellfish

What's Covered and What's Not

- This rule focuses on farm-raised fish or shellfish and wild fish or shellfish, and becomes effective on April 4, 2005.
 - Rules for beef, veal, lamb and pork have not been published yet, because COOL for those products becomes mandatory on Sept. 30, 2006.
- Fish and shellfish are excluded if they are an ingredient in a processed food item.
- Fish and shellfish are excluded if they have undergone a substantial change or had substantial food items added to them (e.g. breaded fish sticks, smoked salmon, marinated fish filets, and canned tuna are not included).
- Covered products that are of mixed origin – a bag of uncooked shrimp – must list all countries of origin for the products included.

What Are the Labeling Requirements?

- Products must be raised, harvested and processed in the U.S. to bear a “U.S. country of origin” label.
- Suppliers must maintain records which indicate the immediate previous source and immediate subsequent recipient of covered commodities for 1 year.
- Retailers must maintain records of origin of products for as long as the product is on hand. Records that identify the supplier and the lot number for the product must be maintained for 1 year.
- Fish markets are not covered under the rule.
- Food service establishments are excluded by law from labeling requirements.
- USDA is the only agency that can take enforcement action, but will try to enter into cooperative agreements with States.
- Products not yet covered by COOL may be labeled on a voluntary basis.
- The Agricultural Marketing Service estimates that the outreach and education program necessary to inform fish and shellfish producers and retailers of the requirements of COOL will take approximately one year.